

[22 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

2000-01 is likely to be lower than that of preceding few years (1996-97 to 1999-2000) but slightly higher than that of 1995-96. The low production during 2000-01 is expected due to aberrant weather conditions.

Track-II Diplomacy to solve Kashmir problem

*385. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Track-II diplomacy is in operation for solving Kashmir problem as reported by the Indian Press; and

(b) if so, what are the main features of this policy?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The term "Track II" is used in popular parlance, and in the media, to describe the exchanges between academics, scholars, journalists etc., from India and Pakistan. These meetings, which take place on a broad range of subjects, are of a private nature and do not have any official significance.

The State of Jammu & Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the forcible and illegal occupation by Pakistan. Under the Simla Agreement and the Lahore Declaration, which are the cornerstones of India-Pakistan bilateral relations, both India and Pakistan are committed to resolving all issues peacefully through bilateral discussions. Government have reiterated their commitment to resuming the Composite Dialogue initiated by India in 1998. An appropriate environment is an obvious requirement for a meaningful dialogue. For this, Pakistan must end its sponsorship of cross border terrorism and abandon hostile propaganda against India.

Land acquired for setting-up ISRO

*386. SHRI P. SOUNDARARAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families whose lands were acquired for setting-up of ISRO unit at Mahendragiri in Thirunelveli district in Tamil Nadu;